

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-24 (Cancelled)

Claim 25 (New) A method of starting a first routing device which connects a plurality of networks to which a plurality of second routing devices are connected, said method comprising:

storing master router data and network identification data on each of the second routing devices, wherein:

the master router data stored on each of the second routing devices indicates whether each respective routing device of the second routing devices is (i) a master router located on a path to a parent router that assigns the network identification data to the networks or (ii) a slave router, which is a router other than a master router; and

the network identification data stored on each of the second routing devices identifies a network, of the plurality of networks, to which each respective routing device of the second routing devices is connected;

requesting, via the first routing device, the master router data from each of the second routing devices on each of the networks which the first routing device connects;

acquiring, via the first routing device, the requested master router data;

detecting a number of master routers on the networks which the first routing device connects according to the acquired master router data; and

disabling a functionality of the first routing device when the number of detected master routers is zero or two or more.

Claim 26 (New) The method according to claim 25, further comprising:

one of the second routing devices receiving data relating to a request for an attribute of the second routing device from a source routing device; and

the second routing device, which received the data relating to the request, returning a response.

Claim 27 (New) The method according to claim 26, further comprising the second routing device, which received the data relating to the request, returning the response if a

hop count is zero and the network identification data of the source routing device is different from the network identification stored in the second routing device which received the data relating to the request.

Claim 28 (New) The method according to claim 26, further comprising transmitting a request, to a second routing device, of the plurality of second routing devices, identified as a master router by master router data stored therein, for reading out information relating to the parent router.

Claim 29 (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein:

only the master router requests writing of the network identification data to communication devices connected to the plurality of networks, the communication devices being devices other than the first or second routing devices;

the master router accepts a request for writing the network identification data only from the parent router; and

the parent router does not accept the request for writing the network identification data.

Claim 30 (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein a communication device, being a device other than a routing device, is connected to any of the networks, and stores network identification data to identify a network, of the plurality of networks, to which the communication device is connected, said method further comprises:

transmitting requests, to the communication devices connected to each of the networks to which the first routing device is connected, for reading out network identification data; and

disabling the functionality of the first routing device when a configuration of the networks to which the first routing device is connected is different from a configuration of networks stored by the first routing device.

Claim 31 (New) The method according to claim 30, further comprising transmitting a request, to a second routing device, of the plurality of second routing devices, identified

as a master router by master router data stored therein, for reading out information relating to the parent router.

Claim 32 (New) The method according to claim 30, wherein:

only the master router requests writing of the network identification data to communication devices connected to the plurality of networks, the communication devices being devices other than the first or second routing devices;

the master router accepts a request for writing the network identification data only from the parent router; and

the parent router does not accept the request for writing the network identification data.

Claim 33 (New) The method according to claim 25, further comprising transmitting a request, to a second routing device, of the plurality of second routing devices, identified as a master router by master router data stored therein, for reading out information relating to the parent router.

Claim 34 (New) The method according to claim 33, wherein:

only the master router requests writing of the network identification data to communication devices connected to the plurality of networks, the communication devices being devices other than the first or second routing devices;

the master router accepts a request for writing the network identification data only from the parent router; and

the parent router does not accept the request for writing the network identification data.

Claim 35 (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein:

only the master router requests writing of the network identification data to communication devices connected to the plurality of networks, the communication devices being devices other than the first or second routing devices;

the master router accepts a request for writing the network identification data only from the parent router; and

the parent router does not accept the request for writing the network identification data.

Claim 36 (New) A first routing device connecting a plurality of networks to which a plurality of second routing devices are connected, each of the second routing devices storing master router data and network identification data, the master router data indicating whether each respective routing device of the second routing devices is a master router located on a path to a parent router that assigns the network identification data to identify the networks or a slave router which is a router other than a master router, and the network identification data identifying a network, of the plurality of networks, to which each respective routing device, of the second routing devices, is connected, said first routing device comprising:

a requesting section operable to make a request for the master router data from each of the second routing devices on each of the networks which said first routing device connects;

an acquiring section operable to acquire the requested master router data;

a detecting section operable to detect a number of master routers on the networks which the first routing device connects according to the acquired master router data; and

a disabling section operable to disable a functionality of said first routing device when the number of detected master routers is zero or two or more.

Claim 37 (New) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program, the program causing a computer to execute a method of starting a first routing device which connects a plurality of networks to which a plurality of second routing devices are connected, said method comprising:

storing master router data and network identification data on each of the second routing devices, wherein:

the master router data stored on each of the second routing devices indicates whether each respective routing device of the second routing devices is (i) a

master router located on a path to a parent router that assigns the network identification data to identify networks or (ii) a slave router, which is a router other than a master router; and

the network identification data stored on each of the second routing devices identifies a network, of the plurality of networks, to which each respective routing device of the second routing devices is connected;

requesting, via the first routing device, the master router data from each of the second routing devices on each of the networks which the first routing device connects;

acquiring, via the first routing device, the requested master router data;

detecting a number of master routers on the networks which the first routing device connects according to the acquired master router data; and

disabling a functionality of the first routing device when the number of detected master routers is zero or two or more.

Claim 38 (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 37, further comprising:

one of the second routing devices receiving data relating to a request for an attribute of the second routing device from a source routing device; and

the second routing device, which received the data relating to the request, returning a response.

Claim 39 (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 38, further comprising, the second routing device, which received the data relating to the request, returning the response if a hop count is zero and the network identification data of the source routing device is different from the network identification stored in the second routing device which received the data relating to the request.

Claim 40 (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 37, wherein a communication device, being a device other than a routing device, is connected to any of the networks, and stores network identification data to identify a network, of the

plurality of networks, to which the communication device is connected, said method further comprises:

transmitting requests, to the communication devices connected to each of the networks to which the first routing device is connected, for reading out network identification data; and

disabling the functionality of the first routing device when a configuration of the networks to which the first routing device is connected is different from a configuration of networks stored by the first routing device.

Claim 41 (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 37, further comprising transmitting a request, to a second routing device, of the plurality of second routing devices, identified as a master router by master router data stored therein, for reading out information relating to the parent router.

Claim 42 (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 37, wherein:

only the master router requests writing of the network identification data to communication devices connected to the plurality of networks, the communication devices being devices other than the first or second routing devices;

the master router accepts a request for writing the network identification data only from the parent router; and

the parent router does not accept the request for writing the network identification data.